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Good Morning distinguished committee members:

Personal responsibility. When we have it, we're in control of our lives.

However, all too often this right is taken away from older people and people with disabilities. When personal responsibility is taken away, others are given the power to make decisions about a person's life based on the label, instead of seeing a person as a unique individual, who has specific wants, needs, interests, likes, and dislikes. Pigeon-holing people based on their labels should be a relic of the institutional-era, but it's still a common, and horrific, practice in LTC.

So I ask: when we make decisions based on a person's label, are *we* the ignorant ones? The ignorance within MI LTC must stop and House Bill 5389 Single Point of Entry is a starting point in combating this issue. HB 5389 will provide a source for consumers, their loved ones and others to gain information on LTC options, planning and supports. Furthermore, adopting a single point of entry will promote collaboration among all community providers of LTC as well as those providing acute, primary, and emergency care.

The Single Points of Entry Bill will allow more efficient management of public funds, which is crucial during our state's current budget crisis. In addition, a Single Point of Entry holds a wide range of stakeholders including providers, consumers, administrators, and legislators accountable for their actions and services as well as implementing the much-needed element of Person-Centered-Planning within the LTC system.

In the end it all comes down to this: what would you want if it were you? Do you want to be controlled by others or do you want to take personal responsibility and live life your way? It can really be that simple. By supporting HB 5389 you will promote REAL choice within LTC.

We must presume competence in others and do whatever it takes to provide the tools, supports, and environments that enable people to take more responsibility for their lives. With your support of a single point of entry system within MI, you will be providing real choice and supporting personal responsibility.